

### **Mayor's Monthly Message: December 2021**

Here we are amidst the 2021 Holiday Season! I always look forward to this time of year because the holidays tend to bring out the best in all of us. December is a time for holiday traditions with family and friends. It is also a time to reflect on 2021 and all that has happened over the past year. The challenges we faced bring strength and refinement. The lessons that we've learned, give us the knowledge to make better decisions. Lastly, the gratitude we have in our hearts help us have a deeper understanding and respect in every aspect of our life. In our great town of Florence, AZ, you don't have to look very far to find kindness and selflessness on display, especially during this time of year. As is the case in many communities, we are blessed with a variety of local civic organizations that regularly host events and fund raisers in support of good causes. In addition to the outstanding civic organizations that make Florence a wonderful community, we also have many individual residents who donate their time, talents, and treasures. During this holiday season, I would like to give a heartfelt 'Thank You' for the accomplishments this year. First of all, to our many businesses and governmental agencies providing employment opportunities and contribute to our local economy. I sincerely appreciate your commitment to our town, hard work, and quality of services. To those who are serving in the capacity as a volunteer and in community groups, thank you for making our Town one of the best places for anyone to live and for enriching and enhancing the lives of others. Last, but not least, our Town of Florence employees, thank you for all that you do each and every day. Your dedication, loyalty, and hard work are very much appreciated. It is an honor to serve as your mayor and I'll continue to work hard to bring positive growth into our community, while maintaining our #1 Safe Town in AZ. There are many exciting projects in the planning stages for the upcoming year.

At the last meeting in November, The Outstanding Employee Recognition Program Award recognized Lieutenant Franklin Caldwell for his outstanding contributions to our organization and celebrates these achievements with Lieutenant Caldwell and his family. This award is given based on employee nominations that are submitted to the EIC, which then hears each nomination, and based on the criteria within the Program Policy, chooses the monthly winner of the award. Each employee who is recognized will receive a \$75.00 gift certificate from a local business of the winners choosing, and a certificate which the winner receives publicly at a Town Council meeting to celebrate their contribution(s) to the Town. Lieutenant Caldwell is the Team's second employee to receive this award; the following is what a co-worker had to say about Lieutenant Caldwell's contribution to the work environment:

"Nomination: Dear EIC Committee Members The weekend of Country Thunder is a busy time in the Town of Florence. I want to recognize Lieutenant Franklin Caldwell for his actions on Wednesday October 13, 2021. With the gates of Country Thunder waiting to be open traffic backed up in all directions. A mix of event traffic waiting to start their fun at Country Thunder, and residents trying to get to work, appointments, or simply home was causing a major inconvenience and safety issue. LT. Caldwell had never experienced this event prior to this day. After a quick analysis of what was occurring, he quickly formulated a plan based on his prior experiences. He took

control and began positioning his units to control the intersection at Hunt Hwy and Hwy 79. Once he verified proper intersection control, he used what he referred to as the 7th St. model. He began communicating with his units to stop traffic and use the opposite lanes to move local traffic through. This is a very risky, intense, and difficult operation to pull off at a simple traffic scene, but this involved moving vehicles miles, in some cases, to clear up the congestion. I believe LT. Caldwell deserves recognition for these actions, because in years past this same event has caused gridlock in the Town of Florence. Many minor collisions have occurred causing damage and injuries without intervention like LT. Caldwell did on October 13. The operation lasted several hours, and he constantly evaluated the effectiveness and safety of what was occurring. He maintained contact and coordination with the other public safety entities on scene and communicated his intentions clearly. The level of coordination quickly developed between all agencies and his calm demeanor throughout gave no indication of losing control. I have worked a handful of events with Frank over the last few months. He is a safety conscious individual who takes his role seriously in protecting his officers and acting in the best interest of the Town. He speaks fondly of his prior experiences in Law Enforcement and uses his expertise to benefit the safety, efficiency, and the overall customer service that we deliver as a Town. It is not surprising to me that he would jump into action as he did this October and have the massive impact on the safety of our citizens.”

On December 6, 2021, we will hold a presentation celebrating Jacqui Moore’s retirement after 14.5 years of dedicated service. Ms. Jacqui Moore, Payroll Specialist, has elected to resign effective December 3, 2021. Jacqui began working for the Town in on April 9, 2007, as our Payroll Specialist. She has been in that position for the duration of her employment and has provided 14.5 years of dedicated service to the Town. The Town would like to express its gratitude for all the years of dedicated service and wish her well in the future. She will be missed by the Finance Department and Town employees.

Also, on December 6, 2021, The Outstanding Employee Recognition Program Award will recognize Virginia (Virgie) Felix for her outstanding contributions to our organization and celebrates these achievements with Virgie, her co-workers, and her family. Virgie is the Team’s third employee to receive this award; the following is what a co-worker had to say about Virgie’s contribution to the work environment. The nomination received for her was:

“My nomination is a truly OUTSTANDING EMPLOYEE! I would like to nominate VIRGIE FELIX!!! Virgie always has a smile on her face, positive attitude and is always professional each day. Virgie has an excellent reputation with all Town Staff, as she is the "go to girl" when it comes to employees, managers, and directors needing advice, information, or direction. She communicates with direct and indirect contacts and is very resourceful. Virgie's customer service is sincere and extraordinary. If she doesn't have the answer to a question or situation, she will find a resolution then follow up with the individual. I feel Virgie is a leader not only in her position but as an individual. She is ALWAYS willing and able to make time for others at work and in the community. Virgie never asks for anything in return. Virgie goes above and beyond;

she is very giving, thoughtful, and humble. Always trying to boost moral and encourage the positive in others at work. I have the most respect for VIRGIE for her integrity to the Town and Employees as a coworker. Her job performance is remarkable, and she is dedicated to the Town of Florence. I am honored to have VIRGIE on our team!!!”

Clearly, we have a lot of reasons to be thankful in Florence, AZ. As a final thought of the 2021 year to all of our residents, thank you again for this opportunity to serve you, it means the world to me to give back to our town and help make the future a better and more beautiful place for generations to come. My wish for you and yours is to have a peaceful and joyous holiday season and a prosperous, happy and healthy New Year.

Upcoming Events for the month of December 2021:

| December | TBD                | Hometown Holidays                         | Recreation Division | Throughout Florence               |
|----------|--------------------|---|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Dec 2    | 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm  | Santa Cruise                              | Recreation Division | Historic Downtown Main Street     |
| Dec 3    | 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm  | Christmas on Main Street                  | Recreation Division | Historic Downtown Main Street     |
| Dec 4    | 7:30 am            | Jingle Bell Jog                           | Recreation Division | Heritage Park Start/Stop location |
| Dec 4    | 9:00 am – 11:00 am | Breakfast with Santa                      | Recreation Division | Library and Community Center      |
| Dec 11   | 8:00 am – 12:00 pm | Farmer’s Market                           | Chamber of Commerce | McFarland State Historic Park     |
| Dec 17   | 5:00 pm – 8:00 pm  | Historic Florence 3 <sup>rd</sup> Fridays | Chamber of Commerce | Historic Downtown Main Street     |

In addition to this monthly message, you can find all town council meeting agendas and minutes at: <http://www.florenceaz.gov/town-council/> and our regularly scheduled meetings are the first and third Mondays, at 6 pm, at Town Hall in Florence, AZ. As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out at [Mayor@florenceaz.gov](mailto:Mayor@florenceaz.gov).

Sincerely,

Tara Walter  
Mayor of Florence, AZ